- Issue of safty alerts to other ONGC work centres.
- Extensive training on various fire fighting programmes.
- Strict adherence to regular different levels of fire fighting drills at each and every ONGC work center.

Hike in Price of Gas

2308. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Group of Ministers in respect of gas price hike has submitted its recommendations; and

(b) by when the Central Government will decide on this matter?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR) (a) and (b) Based on the recommendations of the Group of Ministers (GoM) the Government have revised the price of natural gas with effect from 1.7.2005.

Effective 1.7.2005, the consumer price of gas produced by ONGC and OIL from existing fields given to them on a nomination basis (APM gas) is Rs. 3,200 per thousand cubic meter (MCM) exclusive of royalty, taxes & levies and transmission charges.

The power and fertilizer sectors are critical to the economic development of the country and the output price of these sectors is either controlled for regulated by the Central and State Governments. Therefore, these Governments have to bear the burden of large subsidies in these sectors. Under court orders, commitments have to be made to specific and users. Small scale consumers having allocations upto 0.05 million standard cubic meters per day (MMSCMD) are also given priority in gas supply. Accordingly, it has been decided in the public interest, that all available APM gas would be supplied to only power and fertilizer sector consumers against their existing allocations, in addition to the specific and users committed under Court orders and small-scale consumers having allocations upto 0.05 MMSCMD. However the gas price for transport sector (CNG), Agra Ferozabad small industries, and other small scale consumers, with allocations upto 0.05 MMSCMD, would be progressively increased over the next 3 to 5 years to reflect the-market price.

The price of APM gas for consumers in the North-East region has been revised to Rs. 1920/MCM effective 1.7.2005.

The price of gas for consumers other than those stated above is market related.

Recognition of Workers' Union

2309. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is **a** fact that majority of the workers and employees working in Indian Oil Corporation (Assam Oil Division) have demanded recognition of union through secret ballot;

(b) whether his Ministry has received individually signed mass petitions from workers in this respect; and

(c) if so, the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MAN I SHANKAR AIYAR) (a) A majority of the workers (1536 out of 2053) of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (Assam Oil Division) are members of the Assam Oil Company (AOC) Labour Union, which is a recognised union. However, the Mineral Oil Workers Union (MOWU), another Trade Union, which is mainly a contractors' workmen union, have claimed to be having membership of regular workmen of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (Assam Oil Division) MOWU has demanded verification of membership through secret ballot.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise, in view of (b) above.

Allocation of kerosene to Chhattisgarh

†2310. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the basis on which allotment of Kerosene oil of Public Distribution System is made to State;

(b) whether Kerosene oil is being allotted to the States on prescribed norms if not, the reasons therefor;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.